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# THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING

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## EDITORIAL COMMENT



### MISUSE OF THE UNIFORM

IN spite of earnest and wide-spread efforts made in our home city during the weeks preceding Christmas to influence nurses not to appear in public in uniform while selling Red Cross seals, several nurses, or women dressed in white to resemble nurses, were seen at the post office and the most prominent stores in the booths where the seals were sold. Only one genuine nurse was recognized, the other women wearing all sorts of white dresses from a waist of all-over embroidery to a dress which showed below the apron several inches of bedraggled, lace-trimmed skirt.

It is evident that if this exploitation of the nurses' costume is to be stopped, the agitation must not be confined to the holiday season but must be carried on through the year so that a sentiment may be aroused among the better class of nurses against its abuse in this manner.

The importance of educating the public to recognize that no reputable nurse appears in a public place in uniform has been startlingly demonstrated by a recent case in the police court. A woman of foreign birth, posing as a nurse, appeared in court "in a white nurse's dress with a Red Cross brooch at her throat," who was plaintiff in a breach of promise suit, the testimony bringing out the fact that she had been brought into this country for immoral purposes. Much of the testimony was too indecent to be published, even in the newspaper, and the jury handed in a sealed verdict. While a year or two ago the public would at once have recognized the fact that in this community no

respectable nurse would be seen in such a place in uniform, the recent exploiting of the uniform in the sale of Red Cross seals in so many places in the city must, we fear, have weakened public sentiment in regard to its dignity.

This is a matter that associations all over the country should take up immediately and put themselves on record as either approving or disapproving the use of the uniform for this or any kind of advertising. It should also be forcibly impressed upon pupil nurses about to graduate by their superintendents that the wearing of the uniform only when engaged in actual nursing is not merely a matter of personal taste, but one which affects the safety and dignity of the whole nursing body.

#### ONE WAY OF ATTACKING THE ALMSHOUSE PROBLEM

At the October meeting of the Missouri State Nurses' Association, held in St. Louis, one of the most interesting reports and discussions we ever listened to at a nurses' meeting, was that on the almshouse situation. Members in different sections of the state had inspected such institutions in their localities, and while a few of the reports showed fairly good conditions, the majority were reported as in a state almost past one's comprehension. This association had last year affiliated with the State Conference of Charities and Corrections and a request had come to it from that Conference for co-operation in the matter of bettering conditions in the county almshouses; a committee for this purpose was appointed from the state association.

As a result of the conference between the committees from the two associations, Charlotte Forrester of Kansas City is starting out this month on a tour of inspection of the almshouses and jails of the state, as a direct representative of the Conference of Charities and Corrections, but—and this is of special interest to us—the state nurses' association pays her expenses, the nurses having money, and the State Conference having no funds to pay her way, though possessing the power to appoint her. This appointment, while interesting from the fact that Miss Forrester is a nurse of experience, a member of the Missouri Board of Nurse Examiners, and a woman of ability and presence, is doubly interesting from the fact of the broader authority with which she is vested as a result of the affiliation between the two organizations.

We understand that in most of the states the work of the almshouse committees of the American Nurses' Association is at a standstill and that the committee is disheartened by what seems to be a lack of definite

results along these lines. We believe that in order to accomplish much in the way of reform, nurses must affiliate with organizations with recognized state authority, and Missouri seems to have solved the problem in what promises to be a very efficacious way.

#### A PROFITABLE OCCUPATION FOR IDLE DAYS

THE happy thought occurs to us that we might secure more papers from private nurses, showing the practical nursing side of their work, if it were possible to make them more generally understand that such material, when written exclusively for this Journal will, if accepted, be paid for. To those whom we are able to reach we suggest that some of the so-called waiting time between cases could be so occupied. By doing this, what would otherwise be lost time could be turned to remunerative account. We want to call the attention of our private nursing readers to the increasing amount of space we are giving to social service, moral prophylaxis, etc., and to say again, as we have said before, that the reason for this is that the workers along those lines are willing to contribute such papers to our pages, although these special workers are employed every week day in the year, with the exception of their brief vacation, while the private nurse has periods of enforced idleness which she does not largely use for writing out her experiences for the benefit of her profession.

While there are few changes year by year in the fundamental principles of nursing, when we look back five or ten years or longer we find that in all training schools there have been developments in the technique which make for the greater comfort of the patient and the dexterity of the nurse. Every woman of years of experience as a private nurse has worked out methods of her own to meet the exigencies of the various environments in which she finds herself, simplifying or amplifying her methods according to the resources of the household, without changing the essentials underlying good nursing practice—in other words, she has a variety of methods for accomplishing the same end. Certain nurses become experts in methods worked out by them through their own experience, as is illustrated by Miss Lee's article on small-pox in the present issue of the JOURNAL. Methods of treatment are also constantly changing, hardly any two physicians treat the same disease in the same way, so that a nurse's knowledge is constantly broadened and she should have much valuable information to give to her profession which cannot be found in text-books. All such practical papers are of great interest and advantage to our readers, whether graduate or student nurses.

Writing for publication is a habit that may be cultivated. Contributions often reach us that are interesting and of use but not sufficiently finished in character to be used as articles. These are put into the letter department where they serve their purpose, but are not paid for. If such writers will keep trying to express themselves, they will find it easier each time and will finally progress to the body of the magazine. Some of our most valued contributors began in a modest timid way but gained confidence and facility of expression with further experience.

To all contributors, whether of articles or items, the following dates should be borne in mind. Papers for the body of the magazine must be in our hands at the Rochester office, before the 1st of the month, department material before the 12th, advertising material before the 14th, and short items before the 18th, on which date the JOURNAL pages close absolutely. Subscriptions may be sent to either the Rochester or Philadelphia office at any time.

#### MRS. LOUNSBERY'S PHYSIOLOGY FOR SCHOOLS

A most useful pamphlet, called "Ten Weeks in Physiology and Hygiene for the Lower Grades of the Public Schools" has been prepared by Mrs. Harriet Camp Lounsbury, sanitary school inspector of the Charleston, West Virginia, independent school district. It is printed for the use of the public schools of that city, and is one of the most practical books of the kind that we have seen. It contains, first, an outline of the subjects to be covered, beginning with the 1st grade, and going up to the 6th, which the teacher may handle according to her own ideas if she chooses, or she may consult the second part, which is an appendix and contains the subject matter on which the outlines are based.

We quote the paragraph on the fly, from the material for the 1st grade, as an illustration of how simply and forcibly these subjects are handled. "A fly loves to walk over every nasty thing it can see. I suppose it likes to eat these nasty things. The trouble is that the fly's foot is covered with tiny hairs that hold small particles of all these things. If any one spits on the floor, the fly walks all over it. They walk over a sore if they can. They gather on any sore place on a horse or dog. Then they come into the house and walk over our bread or stick to the butter or fall into the milk; and if the baby uses a bottle they get on the nipple if it is not in water, and as they leave germs on everything they touch, when the baby puts that nipple in its

little mouth, it sucks those germs right into its little stomach, and of course gets sick. So we are likely to get sick, if we let flies get into the house where they are sure to walk on our food and get germs all over it."

This little book, while intended for teachers, is valuable for a nurse also, in a thousand ways, and may be obtained directly from Mrs. Lounsbery for thirty-five cents, post paid. Her address is found in the Official Directory under the West Virginia heading.

#### A REMINDER FROM THE AMERICAN NURSES' ASSOCIATION

WE want to remind the affiliated associations that with the revision of the by-laws of the American Nurses' Association, which went into effect in June, 1911, the dues for each year are to be paid before April 30, and may be paid earlier. By attending to this promptly the work of the treasurer will be simplified. Members must bear in mind also that according to Article VIII of the by-laws, referred to above, the per capita rate for alumnae associations has been increased from ten to fifteen cents, and that local associations, such as city and county, if they have a membership above fifty, have had their dues increased to ten dollars. Each treasurer should consult these by-laws before making out her check, to be sure she is right in the amount.

At convention time the work of the national officers is very strenuous but if each association will exercise a little forethought and have this sort of detail attended to in advance, while the national treasurer is at home and can do her work at leisure, it will save time and trouble for her and for the secretary, as delegates' cards can be prepared ahead. Another request which needs frequent repetition is that each association shall keep the national secretary informed of any change in the name and address of its secretary.

Just as these pages are going to press the executive committee of the American Nurses' Association is meeting in New York and is making definite plans for the Chicago convention, deciding definitely as to the date, the form of the programme, etc. We shall hope to give the results of this meeting in the March JOURNAL with a first outline of the programme, so that associations may, if they so desire, take up the subjects ahead in their meetings and be prepared for intelligent discussion of them later.

We know that the representation from the middle west and the south in Chicago is going to show the strength of those sections of the country as never before. It will be exactly ten years since the last convention was held in Chicago, when there were 51 delegates present, while

at Boston, last June, there were 251 delegates and 89 permanent members. We predict that the coming meeting will be the greatest gathering of nurses we have ever had in this country.

#### THE RED CROSS MEETINGS

ONLY those who have attended an annual meeting of the Red Cross can have any conception of the inspiration to be gained from this gathering of men and women who represent its executive management in the United States. Our readers are familiar with the work of the enrollment committee and of the effort it has put forth to secure a corps of nurses of the very highest order to serve the country in time of war or calamity, but they may not have realized to what an extent other groups of workers are perfecting methods for quick and efficient relief for every kind of a catastrophe that may befall human beings. In the work of the committees and in the reports given at the open meetings by men and women high in official rank, one could not but be impressed with the ever-widening influence of the Red Cross in our national life, ever ready and alert to give relief or to prevent suffering wherever the need is greater than state force can cope with, studying and planning in this time of peace, for such affiliation of the Red Cross with the army and navy that, in time of war rules and regulations may be understood and confusion reduced to the minimum.

No department made a better showing of work done during the year than that of nursing service as presented by Miss Delano. The medical department is much less well organized, although the American Medical Association has now taken the matter in hand and working through a committee will enroll a corps of physicians for Red Cross service and to act as an army reserve in time of war.

But with all that was reported of work begun, one felt in the atmosphere the limitless possibilities of the Red Cross for philanthropic and educational expansion. For instance, a motion by Miss Boardman was carried, that the Red Cross should undertake rural nursing, and while as yet the matter is in embryo, it suggests a kind of expansion in nursing work in America almost beyond comprehension, not only in carrying relief to thousands of people in isolated places, but in providing work for hundreds of nurses.

There was a social side, also, that was very interesting,—an evening with Miss Delano, when the members of the National Committee and the Red Cross delegates had an opportunity to become better acquainted with each other; a luncheon between sessions; and a reception at the

beautiful home of Miss Mabel Boardman, where the élite of Washington society were invited to meet the Red Cross members.

#### THE NINTH INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS CONFERENCE

PLANS for the Ninth International Conference, to be held in Washington, May 7 to 17, were in the air. We heard much from the Washington members of especial privileges granted by the Government, for the use of buildings, grounds, etc., while the programme, an outline of which was given in the Red Cross Department of the October JOURNAL, will be instructive and entertaining. To the nurses the prize competition should be of special interest. Through the courtesy of Major Lynch we give the latest details in regard to the exhibition and prizes:

The exhibition will be divided into two sections, which will be styled Marie Feodorovna and General. The former is a prize competition, with prizes aggregating 18,000 rubles, or approximately \$9000, divided into nine prizes, one of 6000 rubles, approximately \$3000; two of 3000 rubles each, and six of 1000 rubles each.

The subjects of this competition are as follows:

1. A scheme for the removal of wounded from the battlefield with the minimum number of stretcher bearers.
2. Portable (surgeons') washstands, for use in the field.
3. The best method of packing dressings for use at first aid and dressing stations.
4. Wheeled stretchers.
5. Transport of stretchers on mule back.
6. Easily folding portable stretchers.
7. Transport of the wounded between warships and hospital ships, and the coast.
8. The best method of heating railway cars by a system independent of steam from the locomotive.
9. The best model of portable Roentgen apparatus, permitting utilization of X-rays on the battlefield and at first aid stations.

The maximum prize will be awarded to the best exhibit, irrespective of the subject, and so on.

The General Exhibit is again divided into two parts; the first will be an exhibition by the various Red Cross Associations of the world. The second will be devoted to exhibits by individuals or business houses of any articles having to do with the amelioration of the sufferings of sick and wounded in war, which are not covered by the Marie Feodorovna Prize Competition for the year. While the American Red Cross will



be glad to have any articles pertaining to medical and surgical practice in the field, it is especially anxious to secure a full exhibit relating to preventive measures in campaign. Such articles will be classified as follows:

1. Apparatus for furnishing good water in the field.
2. Field apparatus for the disposal of wastes.
3. Shelter such as portable huts, tents and the like, for hospital purposes.
4. Transport apparatus (to prevent the suffering of sick and wounded) exclusive of such apparatus as specified for the Marie Feodorovna Prize Competition.

As with the Marie Feodorovna Prize Competition, for this country only articles having the approval of the Central Committee of the American Red Cross will be accepted.

Diplomas will be awarded for exhibits in this section of the exhibition as approved and recommended by the Jury.

Further information may be obtained from the Chairman, Exhibition Committee, American Red Cross, Washington, D. C.

It is perhaps to apparatus having to do with prevention of disease in armies that the energies of Americans have been specially directed since the Spanish-American War. Therefore, the last mentioned section of the Exhibition should make an appeal to them.

It will be seen that there are many subjects, especially in the first section, where the practical knowledge of nurses of army experience would seem to make them natural competitors. This is certainly an opportunity for all persons of an inventive turn of mind to put forth their energies, and we hope that nurses may carry off a fair proportion of these prizes.

The meetings of this year are rather complicated, with the International Red Cross meeting in Washington in May, which everyone will want to attend, the conventions of the Superintendents' Society and the American Nurses' Association in Chicago in June, and the International Congress of Nurses in Cologne in July. It will take careful planning, both as to expense and time, for nurses who want to attend them all to do so.

#### MISS FULMER'S RESIGNATION

HARRIET FULMER, who has been for fifteen years supervising nurse of the Visiting Nurse Association of Chicago, has recently resigned her position.

During the pioneer period of visiting nursing in this country Miss Fulmer was a very influential factor. Under her administration of the affairs of the Visiting Nurse Association the corps of nurses increased from seven to sixty-three, and before the taking over by the city of the school nursing and tuberculosis nursing, both of which were inaugurated within the Visiting Nurse Association, the staff had grown to one hundred and three. The follow-up work in the free dispensaries, and welfare nursing service in several industrial establishments, are other branches that have been developed during Miss Fulmer's service. Her share in the building up of the visiting nurse work of the country will always be remembered.

Miss Fulmer will be succeeded by Edna L. Foley, who has been for several years superintendent of nurses of the Municipal Tuberculosis Dispensary in the same city.

SUSTAINING SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE ISABEL HAMPTON  
ROBB MEMORIAL FUND

THE idea of sustaining subscriptions for the Robb Memorial Fund has been already explained by the treasurer in preceding *JOURNALS*. The committee having this matter in hand is now publishing a circular in which individuals and organizations are urged to make pledges for a term of years which shall be collected annually. The point is made that if large organizations would promise to give \$10 for five consecutive years, the amount determined upon, \$50,000 would soon be reached.

CORRECTIONS

IN the January *JOURNAL* the editorial heading, "Nurses on Examining Boards," should have read "Nurses on Boards of Managers." In the Red Cross Department, the name of Mrs. Charles G. Stevenson was placed among members of the National Committee. Mrs. Stevenson was in Washington as the New York State delegate, but she is not a member of the National Committee. Both of these were errors of the editorial office.

It must have been a condition of brain fatigue after the holiday season which made it possible for these mistakes to escape the scrutiny of both the editor and her assistant, when they thought they were making unusual efforts to have the first number of the year typographically perfect. Perhaps only those who have done such work can realize how such mistakes leap at one from the page of the finished magazine after having eluded detection in both sets of proof.